

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-07 LAB-04
NSAE-00 SIL-01 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 /041 W
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AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION EC BRUSSELS
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USMISSION OECD PARIS
AMCONSUL MILAN
AMCONSUL NAPLES
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN, GERMANY
USDOCOSOUTH

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 1 OF 2 ROME 2620

FOR INTAF

E. O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, ELAB, PINR, IT, EFIN
SUBJECT: NEW ITALIAN POLICE UNION FORMED, IN ANTICIPATION
LEGISLATION OF REFORMING AND DEMILITARIZING POLICE

REF: (A) ROME 1638, (1976) AND (B) ROME 348

1. SUMMARY. A NEW NATIONAL POLICE UNION WAS FORMED FEB 9 IN ROME UNDER THE AUSPICES OF ITALY'S TRI-CONFEDERAL UMBRELLA LABOR CONFEDERATION CGIL-CISL-UIL. INTERIOR MINISTER COSSIGA SENT HIS GREETINGS TO THE FOUNDING ASSEMBLY AND PROMISED TO SUBMIT DRAFT LEGISLATION TO PARLIAMENT PROMPTLY TO DEMILITARIZE THE POLICE, LEGALIZE THE RIGHT TO ORGANIZE, AND IN-
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STITUTE OTHER REFORMS. THE NEW UNION VOLUNTARILY RENOUNCES THE RIGHT TO STRIKE. COMMUNIST CGIL SECGENLAMA REFLECTED HIS PARTY'S CAUTIOUS APPROACH TO POLICE UNIONIZATION IN AGREEING WITH PROPOSALS TO MAKE POLICE STRIKES ILLEGAL AND WARNED OTHERS IN THE LABOR MOVEMENT NOT TO MAKE THIS AN ISSUE. END SUMMARY.

1. ABOUT 500 DELEGATES FROM VARIOUS PARTS OF ITALY ASSEMBLED IN ROME FEB 9 TO INAUGURATE, OFFICIALLY, A NEW UNITARY POLICE UNION, AFFILIATED WITH THE FEDERATION CGIL-CISL-UIL (CCU). CGIL SEC GEN LUCIANO LAMA, CISL SECRETARY MANLIO SPANDONARO AND UIL SECRETARY VITTORIO PAGANI (A SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC) REPRESENTED CCU. INTERIOR MINISTER COSSIGA WAS UNABLE TO ATTEND, BUT SENT A MESSAGE WELCOMING FORMATION OF THE UNION AND PROMISING PROMPT SUBMISSION OF LEGISLATION TO REFORM THE POLICE, TO STREAMLINE AND UNIFY ITS ORGANIZATION, DEMOCRATIZE ITS PROCEDURES, INCREASE ITS EFFICIENCY, MAKE IT CIVILIAN AGAIN (IT WAS "MILITARIZED" IN 1945) AND LEGALIZE UNION ORGANIZATION. ACCORDING TO PAGANI, THE NEW UNION ALREADY HAS THE ADHERENCE OF 80-90PERCENT OF PUBLIC SECURITY OFFICIALS THROUGHOUT ITALY. LAMA OBSERVED THAT THIS GIVES IT THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF ORGANIZATION OF ANY ITALIAN UNION.

2. AS PAGANI NOTED, THE NEW UNION VOLUNTARILY RENOUNCES THE RIGHT TO STRIKE AS INCOMPATIBLE WITH THE NATURE OF THE POSSESSION AND ALSO PROHIBITS MEMBERSHIP IN POLITICAL PARTIES AS SIMILARLY INCOMPATIBLE. PAGANI OPPOSED PROPOSALS TO INCLUDE A PROHIBITION AGAINST STRIKES IN THE NEW REFORM LEGISLATION. LAMA, ON THE OTHER HAND, WARNED THAT QUIBBLING ON THIS POINT COULD JEOPARDIZE THE EXISTENCE OF THE UNION. HE SAID THE POLICE, BY THEIR VERY NATURE, COULD AND SHOULD NOT STRIKE IN ANY EVENT, SO LEGISLATION PROHIBITING STRIKES WOULD BE PERFECTLY APPROPRIATE, AND THAT THE UNION COULD RELY ON CCU SUPPORT AND EVEN STRIKE ACTION WHEN NEEDED.

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3. AS NOTED IN REF. A, EFFORTS TO ORGANIZE A POLICE UNION HAVE BEEN GOING ON FOR SOME TIME. THE EFFORTS WERE OFFICIALLY MADE PUBLIC AT AN ORGANIZATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF ABOUT 400 POLICE OFFICIALS IN ROME JUST BEFORE CHRISTMAS, SPONSORED BY CCU. INTERIOR MINISTER COSSIGA HAS EVIDENTLY ENCOURAGED OR AT LEAST TOLERATED THIS EFFORT AS PART OF HIS REFORM PROJECT. THE CCU NATIONAL ASSEMBLY OF UNION OFFICIALS JAN, 7-8 ENDORSED FORMATION OF A UNIFIED NATIONAL POLICE UNION AFFILIATED TO CCU (REF.B)

4. ACCORDING TO SOME PRESS REPORTS, MORE CONSERVATIVE ELEMENTS IN THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY AND THE JUSTICE AND POLICE HIERARCHY HAVE BEEN TRYING TO BLOCK COSSIGA'S REFORMS AND FORMATION OF A UNION AFFILIATED TO CCU. ON JAN. 13, NEWSPAPERS ANNOUNCED THE FORMATION OF AN AUTONOMOUS POLICE UNION, AFFILIATED TO A NATIONAL UNION OF AUTONOMOUS UNIONS (UNSA), WHICH IN TURN FORMED A JOINT FEDERATION WITH SEVERAL OF THE OTHER AUTONOMOUS UNIONS AND GROUPS OF

UNIONS: THE RAILWAY UNION FISAFS, THE SECONDARY AND ELEMENTARY EDUCATION UNIONS SNALS AND SNASE AND THE CONFEDERATION OF AUTONOMOUS UNIONS CISAL. THE NEW FEDERATION WAS DUBBED "UNDERSTANDING (INTESA) OF THE WORKERS "AUTONOMOUS TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS" OR INTESA FOR SHORT. THE NEW AUTONOMOUS POLICE UNION JOINS A SIMILAR AUTONOMOUS MILITARY UNION (SINAM), WHICH CLAIMS 20,000 MEMBERS AND BELONGS TO UNSA AND THUS TO THE NEW "INTESA". IT SEEMS CLEAR, HOWEVER, THAT THE NEWLY-FORMED CCU POLICE UNION WILL BE MUCH STRONGER THAN THE AFFILIATED AUTONOMOUS UNION POLICE UNION.

5. THE COMMUNIST PARTY (PCI) HAS TAKEN AN EXTREMELY CAUTIOUS

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LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SECTION 2 OF 2 ROME 2620

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APPROACH TO MILITARY AND POLICE UNIONIZATION, OPPOSING BOTH

UNTIL FAIRLY RECENTLY. ITS PRESENT ESPONSAL OF POLICE ORGANIZATION IS CAUTIOUS AND RESTRAINED. THE PCI APPROACH TO MILITARY UNIONIZATION IS DISCUSSED IN REF. A. ON DEC.8, THE PCI INTRODUCED A DRAFT BILL IN PARLIAMENT FOR POLICE REFORM AND REORGANIZATION, WHICH MAY TURN OUT TO BE SIMILAR TO COSSIGA'S PROPOSAL. THE PCI'S BILL WOULD GUARANTEE THE RIGHT OF UNION ORGANIZATION BUT PROHIBIT STRIKES, PARTISAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POLITICAL ACTIVITY AND APPEARANCE IN UNIFORM AT POLITICAL RALLIES, EXCEPT UNDER OFFICIAL ORDERS.

6. COMMENT: THE PCI HAS EVIDENTLY OVERCOME ITS RELUCTANCE IN THIS SITUATION BY RECOGNIZING THAT, GIVEN THE SYMPATHETIC ATTITUDE OF THE MINISTER OF THE INTERIOR, THE ORGANIZATION OF THE POLICE IS AN IDEA WHOSE TIME HAS COME. FURTHERMORE, OF THECISL AND UIL HAVE BEEN QUITE DETERMINED TO MOVE AHEAD IN FORMING A UNION. SEVERAL KNOTTY PROBLEMS STILL REMAIN FOR RESOLUTION BY PARLIAMENT WHICH WILL BE CALLED UPON TO ENACT ENABLING LEGISLATION, SUCH AS, WHAT WILL BE THE ATTITUDE OF A UNIONIZED POLICE FORCE WHICH IS CALLED PUT TO CONTROL, SAY, THE UNAUTHORIZED STRIKE ACTIVITIES OF FELLOW CCU UNION MEMBERS? FOR THE PRESENT, AT LEAST, THE GARABINIERI ARE EXCLUDED FROM THE POLICE ORGANIZING EFFORT AND WILL REMAIN A MILITARIED ORGANIZATION.BEAUDRY

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Message Attributes

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Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
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